

CITY OF SAN DIEGO COMMISSION FOR ARTS AND CULTURE

*Five Year Report to the Diversity Initiative Advisory Committee
And the Organizational Support Program Community*

June 16, 2008

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to summarize the impact of the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture's (Commission) Diversity Initiative. This report begins with the Diversity Initiative's history and activities and concludes with results and issues to be addressed. This report shall be subject to discussion and revisions by members of the community, the Diversity Initiative Advisory Committee, the Commission's Policy Committee and ultimately the full Commission.

Background

The Diversity Initiative was launched in 2003 as a multi-year, multi-dimensional project of the Commission. The purpose was to encourage those arts and culture organizations in the Organizational Support Program (OSP) receiving funding through the City's Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) to embrace the concept of developing boards and staff that more closely reflected the demographics of San Diego both as a critical strategy that would empower organizations in the development of new programs and services designed to attract new artists, audiences and participants and make the organizations more accessible to a broader constituency.

The intended outcomes of the Diversity Initiative were to work with the OSP organizations to:

- Increase awareness of the diversity of San Diego as a whole
- Increase awareness of the benefits of diversity
- Institutionalize diversity as a core value throughout all areas (administrative, programming, etc.) of an organization

Diversity Initiative Advisory Committee

The Commission's first action step was to educate itself about diversity so that it could be as informed and aware of the issues as possible. The full body of the Commission participated in two 4-hour trainings that helped them better understand what it means to value diversity as a business practice within nonprofit organizations and produce a work plan (Appendix A).

Following the plan, the Commission formed the Diversity Initiative Advisory Committee comprised of Commissioners and community members representing a broad cross-section of the arts and culture community which worked with Commission staff, representatives from the City's Organizational Effectiveness/Diversity Program and an outside arts management consultant to provide administrative oversight. The Committee dedicated the first few months of its work to educating itself about diversity and planning the work of the Initiative. A major component of the Committee's work involved a thorough review of OSP policies, procedures and informal practices, especially as they related to diversity. The Committee also began to establish baseline data on current diversity practices, advised on the development of education and outreach activities, sponsored diversity events, and above all, served as visible champions for the effort.

Data Collection and Analysis

Early on in the process, the Commission recognized the importance of data collection as it related to policy-making. Therefore, in 2004, the Commission turned its attention to the collection of information that would provide a clear picture of the diversity practices among the OSP organizations. A major data source was the comprehensive OSP application which included a broad range of information from organizational and financial management practices to artistic vision and community outreach strategies.

A subsequent report, *Board Diversity Practices Within San Diego Non-Profit Arts and Culture Organizations*, (March, 2004) summarized the findings from a study which provided baseline data and a statistical analysis of data from the Initiative's first year of implementation (Appendix B). The findings were a result of the analysis of applicant responses to key sections in the application that directly related to board governance and diversity – the *governance* question in the narrative section, the *demographics table*, *goals and objectives*, *challenges* and *response to panel comments* sections. Overall the study found that board diversity improved (percentage of total increased) in six (6) out of nine (9) measured categories, i.e. African American, White (a decrease was seen as improvement for this category), Native American, Other, Gender (where an increase in females was regarded as improvement), and differently-abled. The three categories not showing improvement were Asian, Hispanic and Filipino (Table 1).

Table 1: Board Demographics 2002 – 2003

	Total Board Participation		
	FY02	FY03	% Change
African American	53	70	32%
Asian	55	55	0%
White	1038	1106	7%
Hispanic	113	103	-9%
Filipino	43	37	-14%
Native American	8	10	25%
Other	1	4	300%
Total	1291	1381	7%
Female	622	681	9%
Male	669	700	5%
Differently-abled	12	58	383%

A second statistical analysis of board diversity was conducted by comparing FY08 data with the baseline data. This time improvements were noted in the following groups: African American, Asian, Hispanic (larger numbers for these three groups), White (smaller numbers), and differently-abled. Progress was not observed in the Filipino, Native American, and female groups. It should be noted, however, that during this period, one of the Filipino organizations receiving funding no longer was eligible to apply due to the majority of its

programming occurring outside of the City of San Diego. The loss of this organization from the data set greatly reduced the Filipino numbers in all categories (Table 2).

Table 2: Board Demographics 2002 – 2008

	Total Board Participation		
	FY02	FY08	% Change
African American	53	74	40%
Asian	55	56	2%
White	1038	920	-11%
Hispanic	113	115	2%
Filipino	43	18	-58%
Native American	8	8	0%
Other	1	44	4300%
Total	1291	1243	-4%
Female	622	588	-5%
Male	669	655	-2%
Differently-abled	12	15	25%

Changes to the OSP Application

Concurrent with data collection, the Committee reviewed the OSP Application Guidelines to determine if there were areas in which an organization’s diversity strategies could be highlighted. The committee determined that while the long form application contained numerous opportunities to discuss diversity under criteria such as goals and objectives, programs and services, governance, etc., a separate question was needed to emphasize the importance of this area for applicants using the short form. Subsequent to a public hearing, the Commission approved and incorporated a short form application requirement to respond to the *Diversity Initiative Commitment Statement* (Appendix C) beginning with the FY2007 application.

Organizational Development

By May 2004, in addition to data collection and the development of the diversity website, educating and engaging the arts and culture community, especially staff and boards, assumed primary importance. Organizations eager to share their diversity strategies and accomplishments, partnered with the Commission to implement a number of varied activities designed to build awareness of the value of diversity, teach new marketing strategies, and provide opportunities for networking with colleagues and other community members.

The Commission launched its first community engagement at the City’s only “gay identified” cultural facility, Diversionary Theatre, in collaboration with the San Diego Asian Repertory Theatre. Following a filled-to-capacity special performance of *M. Butterfly*, members of various arts and culture organizations participated in a forum to explore diversity from an Asian American perspective. One of the unanticipated consequences of this engagement was

that many of the participants attended for the first time a performance at this 100-seat theatre in the University Heights neighborhood.

Following the event at Diversionary, a partnership with the San Diego Performing Arts League and National Arts Marketing Project resulted in a *Cross Cultural Marketing Workshop* (May, 2004). This workshop addressed best practices and case studies from arts organizations and representatives from culturally specific organizations in ways to communicate with their communities.

The Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (MCASD) hosted panels addressing geo-demographic and cultural participation characteristics in the Symposium: *Latino San Diego: Challenges and Opportunities* (June, 2004). Four engagements occurred during the month of October including the *Asian Business Association mixer* at the Japanese Friendship Garden, the Symposium: *The Asian Community: Opening Doors and Expanding Opportunities* in conjunction with the San Diego Asian Film Festival, A Dialogue: *Making the Business Case for Diversity* hosted by the San Diego Repertory Theatre and the *Emerging Leaders Workshop* co-sponsored with Americans for the Arts.

Responding to a need for greater participation, the next phase of the initiative implemented a series of roundtable discussions. Hosted by the Museum of Photographic Arts, nearly 200 constituents from the arts and culture community attended the first in the series featuring a keynote address by Ben Cameron, director of Theatre Communications Group, a service organization to the national theatre community (February, 2005). Mr. Cameron shared his experiences in the corporate and non-profit sectors where leaders have successfully established diversity as a cornerstone of their organizations' core values, and his presentation aired on Access TV for an extended period of time.

In February, March and May of 2005, the Commission invited key staff and board members of the 20 largest budget OSP organizations to participate in a series of three, two-hour facilitated roundtable discussions. More than 50 participants representing 18 organizations attended *Valuing Diversity: Paths to Organizational Success* (February, 2005) hosted by the San Diego Museum of Art. This discussion focused on understanding what diversity means, why the board is the best entity to set the diversity agenda, and how building an inclusive organization would have a positive impact on the organization's ability to fulfill its mission.

The second roundtable discussion, *Building Mutually Beneficial Relationships with Diverse Communities* (March, 2005) was hosted by the Reuben H. Fleet Science Center. This roundtable gave participants the opportunity to hear from cultural experts addressing the idea of exploring what "relationships" look like in various communities and strategies to develop and maintain those relationships. The final roundtable in the series, *Pulling The Levers of Change: Identifying Strategic Change Opportunities for your Organization and Diversity* (May, 2005) was hosted by the Old Globe Theatre. This workshop sought to encourage arts and culture executives and board members to share their organizations' successes and challenges related to diversity and to support each others' efforts implementing diversity strategies.

The goal of these discussions was to encourage OSP leaders to examine their diversity policies and practices and to discover opportunities for change. Evaluation of the Diversity Initiative has been ongoing and has posed some interesting challenges. While collecting data related to ethnicity and other diversity categories of staff and board members has been relatively easy as was data related to policies and procedures because those elements are reported in OSP applications, it has not been possible to track the extent to which organizations have been successful in reaching out to diverse groups both as audiences and as participants. A review of qualitative data reveals that some organizations have rewritten their mission statements to include diversity or included diversity in their long range strategic plans. Others have developed advisory councils to assist them in reaching out to specific communities, and still others have made conscious decisions to determine how their annual programming might appeal to broader audiences.

In 2006, community engagements began to focus on helping neighborhood groups gain a better understanding of how they might apply for TOT funding. Many small community organizations reported experiencing barriers to entry because they were not eligible to apply, for example they may not be a non profit organization, or they may not have had staff to devote the time it takes to complete and submit the City's application. In an effort to demonstrate to these organizations that they could still support arts and culture in their communities, a *Dialogue on Partnerships and Collaborations, a Community Arts Forum* (September, 2006) was hosted by the Southeastern Economic Development Corporation.

In June and July of 2007, the Commission presented a two-part workshop series entitled *What's Working: Mission Possible*. The first workshop, hosted by the NTC Foundation, explored *Best Practices from a Corporate Perspective* (June, 2007) and offered arts and culture organizations the opportunity to hear how San Diego's corporations were implementing comprehensive diversity programming. The second workshop hosted by the downtown branch of MCASD focused on *Best Practices from An Organizational Perspective* (July, 2007). More than 80 participants from various organizations gathered to hear others in the field present their unique approaches in three topic areas: *The Youth Voice, Developing A Comprehensive Diversity Strategy and Marketing To New Audiences/Diverse Communities*. Concluding the presentations participants engaged in small breakout sessions for the purpose of exchanging ideas and to talk about opportunities and challenges. The summary report from this workshop is included with this report as Appendix D.

In March, 2008, the Commission in collaboration with Mo'olelo Performing Arts, presented a performance followed by a facilitated discussion of Mo'olelo's production of *Permanent Collection*, a play based on the real events surrounding the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. Nearly 100 arts and culture representatives participated in this event which used the power of live theater to explore individual attitudes toward race, art and culture.

The final workshop of the five-year initiative explored diversity issues from the academic perspective. Once again, nearly 100 arts and culture representatives met in Balboa Park to participate in *The Diversity Doctor Is In – A View From Higher Education* (June, 2008) where five educators shared their insight and critical perspectives on the role diversity plays in governance, fundraising, education, and other programming.

Individuals and Diversity

In an effort to serve diverse individuals as well as organizations, the Commission worked with the Alliance for California Traditional Arts (ACTA), a nonprofit organization which supports exemplary projects by California's traditional and folk artists, to present a series of workshops on *How to Apply for ACTA Grants*, the first of which was hosted by the World Beat Center (May, 2006). The Commission facilitated additional ACTA workshops in at the Mingei International Museum (May, 2007) and at the Balboa Park Club (May, 2008). In addition, the Commission hosts a website (www.sandiegofolklife.com) designed to provide local folk and traditional artists with resources, and interactive calendar, and an online forum.

Over the past two years, the Commission has also endeavored to reach out to young people who are just beginning their careers in arts and culture administration. *Emerging Leaders San Diego*, in collaboration with Americans for the Arts, a national non-profit arts advocacy and service organization for local arts agencies, offered workshops, social networking, and a mentoring program for dozens of San Diego's young people. The Emerging Leaders group provides a structured association of people who are interested in the issues of young professionals and advancing their work nationwide through educational and networking opportunities. Emerging Leaders offers a mechanism to respond to impending leadership changes in the nonprofit arts and culture sector and works to ensure that the next generation of leaders is more diverse and more representative of San Diego.

Best and Promising Practices

In 2006, the Commission released its first *Report on Best Practices* (Appendix E) highlighting the strategies arts and culture organizations were beginning to implement and the planning that was taking place to make their institutions more inclusive and reflective of all of San Diego's populations. The report identified several examples of organizations actively introducing changes that would lead to qualitative and quantitative progress in their long term strategic planning. The report noted the following:

- Board agenda items were regularly featuring diversity issues.
- Policies and procedures were being examined especially in the area of annual giving requirements.
- Diversity language was being incorporated into organizational mission statements.
- Community advisory councils inclusive of San Diego's Latino, Asian and African American communities were being formed.
- Programming choices began to encourage broader appeal as well as reflect the unique border region.
- Collaborations created partnerships between both organizations and communities.
- Marketing strategies were being evaluated in an effort to better reach broader segments of the community.

Panel review comments on applications submitted for Fiscal Year 2007 identified significant increases in the variety of efforts being made by arts and culture organizations to strengthen

their commitment to the many facets of diversity. Organizations were not only acknowledging the necessity for change but also responding to the business case for diversity. Following is a sampling of strategies organizations have been implementing in the areas of “governance and staff development” and “programming and community outreach”:

Governance and Staff Development

- Diversity committees
- Student or youth advisory boards
- Diversity-related goals for nominating committees
- Strategic plans which include a comprehensive set of “diversity action steps”
- Revised board “giving policies” recognizing the importance and value of non-financial contributions from board members
- Board and staff training, for example, on-site Spanish classes for employees

Programming and Community Outreach

- Programming specifically targeted toward reaching ethnically diverse communities
- Programming designed to expand the expectations of mainstream audiences
- Multi-cultural collaborations
- “Pay What You Can” performances to attract younger and more diverse audiences
- Bi-lingual staff
- Multi-disciplinary collaborations, for example, a jazz group presenting with a dance group
- Programming in under-served parts of the City of San Diego
- Free “family nights” including special events to serve local schools and community centers.
- Expansion of school-based programming both during and after school
- Bi-lingual signage and other education materials in museums and cultural centers.
- Establishment of growing “arts and culture districts” at the NTC Promenade/Liberty Station, North Park and Market Creek Plaza
- Programming targeted to specific diverse communities, for example *Thursday Night Thing* and *Tower After Hours*.

Issues for Further Discussion

The Diversity Initiative has served as a catalyst to educate, enrich, promote, strengthen and enhance the fabric of all that is and can become of the rich and vibrant arts and cultural offerings provided by the City of San Diego’s arts and culture organizations. The following are issues to consider as discussions take place regarding the future of the Diversity Initiative:

- Should the Commission maintain a leadership role and commitment to diversity through active recruitment of diverse constituents to its board, staff, committees, and review panels?

- Should the Commission continue its Diversity Initiative Advisory Committee as an on-going committee that monitors the progress of diversity and advises the Commission on future policy and programmatic matters?
- Should the Commission continue to focus its technical assistance resources primarily in the area of diversity or expand to other nonprofit management issues, for example, fundraising, marketing, strategic planning, evaluation, education, etc.?
 - Should the Commission continue to maintain the Folk Arts website?
 - Should the Commission continue to facilitate the Emerging Leaders group?
 - Should the Commission commit resources for the maintenance of a diversity website?
- Should the Commission continue to promote diversity within the organizations it funds through its application process?
 - Should the “Response to the Diversity Statement” requirement continue (short form only)?
 - Should the “Demographics Table” requirement continue?
 - Should the Commission require a reference to diversity within the mission statement of every organization?
 - Should the Commission require every organization to include at least one goal with objectives related to diversity?

Recommendations

On May 29, 2008, a public hearing was convened to provide an opportunity for organizations receiving funds through the Commission and other stakeholders to offer comments on the Issues identified in the Commission's *Five Year Report to the City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture Diversity Initiative Advisory Committee and the Organizational Support Program Community*. Following the public hearing, the Commission's Diversity Advisory Committee met to review the report and to consider the public comments. The Diversity Advisory Committee made recommendations to the Commission's Executive Committee. At its July 10, 2008 meeting, the Executive Committee reviewed the Diversity Advisory Committee's recommendations as well as additional public comments submitted electronically. The following recommendations were then forwarded to the full Commission for approval at its July 18, 2008 meeting:

1. The Commission should continue to maintain a leadership role in promoting diversity as a good business strategy and as a public service imperative.
2. The Commission should include a consideration of establishing a Diversity Committee as a regular ongoing sub-committee when it next evaluates its sub-committee structure.
3. Commission staff is encouraged to continue offering diversity-related technical assistance as part of a strategy to provide comprehensive technical assistance to the nonprofit arts and culture sector.
4. Commission staff is encouraged to survey folk and traditional artists living in the region in order to determine if the folk and traditional arts website should be maintained.
5. Commission staff is encouraged to maintain the mentorship program for emerging leaders for at least one more year.
6. Commission staff is encouraged to regularly update the diversity section of its website with resources that will be of value to the nonprofit arts and culture sector.
7. The Commission should not require a diversity component within the mission statement of applicant organizations.
8. The Commission should continue to require all applicants for Organizational Support Program (OSP) funding to demonstrate a commitment to making arts and culture more accessible to diverse audiences and participants, including requiring applying organizations to include the goals and objectives section of their application at least one goal with accompanying objectives related to diversity. Staff should monitor this process and make recommendations as necessary.

9. The Commission should comply with all local, state, and federal laws in the administration of its allocations programs. Commission staff and the City Attorney's Office should regularly review all policies and procedures, identify any problem areas and recommend changes accordingly.
10. Commission staff is encouraged to monitor the progress of board, volunteer, and workforce diversification through a process connected to the contracting process as opposed to the application process.